

To	Carey Lando, Thomas Kronemeyer	Reference number
		130354/TL
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From	Trent Lethco x 713 (SF)	Date
		September 29, 2004
Subject	Response to Comments at TAM Board Meeting	

This memorandum provides a summary of comments and suggestions that have been received from TAM Commissioners and the Public at the TAM Board Meeting on September 23rd, 2005.

Comments on the local HIP and TLC Programs

- Question: What are the trade offs between offering a TLC program, a HIP program or both?

Response: By offering both programs, Marin TAM can offer incentives to local jurisdictions creating housing and still offer a grant program to fund neighborhood transportation projects that support a community's development and redevelopment goals. It was the preference of the TPLUS Advisory Committee to offer both programs with an emphasis on the Housing Incentive Program.

- Question: Do we have to wait three years before we do a TLC Capital Call?

Response: No. This is a pilot program. It is recommended that TAM review the program annually and determine if adjustment is needed. If it is decided in subsequent years that the program needs to change, TAM can offer a local TLC Capital call when appropriate. It has not been tested in Marin County so it is hard to say what will happen until the program is tried. At the regional level, MTC saw 2/3 of the housing projects go towards construction but some funds were returned.

- Question: When funding decisions are made, who makes the final decision?

Response: TAM staff will review applications and make an eligibility determination for the housing project used to claim funds and for the expected transportation investment. This would mean that a housing project meets the eligibility criteria and the funds will be reserved for a transportation investment. Once the housing breaks ground, the local jurisdiction can claim the funds to construct a transportation project. When a funding award is made, it is recommended that TAM bring the list of funding awards to the TAM board for final approval.

- Comment: It doesn't seem that smaller cities can participate.

Response: HIP is necessarily focused on downtown areas and transit corridors. Smaller cities are unlikely to participate in the HIP portion of the program given historic development trends, current housing elements, and transit frequencies in smaller cities. Smaller cities can compete if they are creating transit-focused housing at the appropriate density levels where transit service frequencies are meeting the eligibility criteria. Smaller cities are more likely to participate in the TLC Capital program. Further, it is important to keep in mind that there is still the regional program so the local and regional programs can work in tandem. A local city can apply in both programs.

- Related Question: Can one project get funding from both regional and local HIP or TLC programs?
- Response: Yes. The transportation project must be segmented so that each element is fully funded by either the regional or the local program. Neither the regional nor the local program will partially fund projects. Part of MTC's criteria is that projects are fully funded upon award.
- Question: How did you develop the participation table?
- Related Question: What if a project or projects are not shown on your list?

Response: The participation chart was based on both historic trends (using the County's PROPDEV database) and what is possible based on the general plans housing elements currently in place. Provided in the background memo on pages 11 and 12, a listing of projects likely to meet the criteria of HIP and their possible award (based on HIP guidelines) are listed. These tables are intended to provide a sense of which cities may participate and what funding they may receive. The list is not intended to be exhaustive nor is the list representative of the final universe of projects that may participate in the program.

- Question: Should TAM allow for a smaller award size?

Related Comment: Since MTC has a minimum grant size; it is harder for smaller cities to participate in the regional programs.

Related Comment: We are not talking about large amounts of funding. The more we can pool funds for greater impact and for greater concentration, the better off we are. I want to avoid a sprinkling of funds here and there and focus on elements with a bigger impact.

- Response: The smaller award size allows for more cities to participate in the county program. It also allows cities to participate that cannot participate in the regional program. At the same time, it is important to be mindful of the administrative burdens associated with using Federal funds. This is a compromise for TAM and for the AC members. The program offers something smaller for the county but still has a minimum size to ensure the city receiving the grant doesn't spend more on the grant administration than the actual award amount.
- Comment: Could TAM do a TLC Capital Call For Projects after one year?

Response: Yes. If after one or two years, if no eligible projects have come in, TAM could choose to conduct a TLC Capital Call For Projects. It is a pilot program and some flexibility is helpful.

- Comment: We should evaluate the program after one year and, if necessary, conduct a TLC Capital Call For Projects.
- Related Comment: There are not too many cities in Marin pushing housing projects at 20 units to the acre with the number of bedrooms required for a minimum grant. It is likely there will be a local TLC Capital Call For Projects.

Public Comments on the local TLC and HIP Program

- Some cities that have good transportation projects will not be able to get funding through this program. It would be better to have a TLC Capital Call For Projects come first or do them together.

Response: The TPLUS AC wanted to place an emphasis on housing and provide incentives to cities providing for transit focused housing. These are transportation funds being spent on transportation projects. It is just a question of which level to use to access them. Thus, we are recommending an approach that starts with housing and moves to the capital program later

- There are pressing transportation needs in the county and this program takes resources away from needed projects throughout the county.

Response: The program is designed to respond to pressing transportation needs in the county. Some believe that placing housing in close proximity to transit responds to another pressing transportation need in the county by making transit a realistic choice for more people.

- There are no criteria or guidelines to ensure these funds are spent on good transportation projects.

Response: MTC has established a whole range of eligibility criteria as a part of the program. Funds must be spent on bicycle, pedestrian and transit related projects. The eligibility criteria were not discussed today in the interests of keeping the presentation concise.

- Smaller cities are not able to participate in the program

Response: The local HIP program is necessarily focused on the urban areas, downtown business districts, and transit corridors of the county.